

# LIMERICK SOCIALIST

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**THE  
VOICE  
OF THE  
WORKER**

'That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic ...' *James Connolly*



## THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

*Charlie  
Haughey  
in the  
saddle*



## THE IRISHTOWN



# THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

DISCUSSION ARTICLE

PART ONE

BY WILLIAM LENIHAN

Right! Right! Was there ever more insistence on rights, human and political, personal and collective, than in this day and age? Every day we see manifestations of this insistence in the form of public marches, press articles, television and radio programmes, and demonstrations of all kinds, in all places and practically at all times. This is as it should be, especially where a right is suppressed or abused, since we live in a democratic society which gives us the RIGHT to protest, provided such protest is peaceful, within the law and does not lead to violence.

But some rights, including the right to strike, can be abused. How many of us are aware of the long hard struggle it took to win these rights? This brief article outlines the origin of the strike weapon and by doing so may help to show why it should be used with intelligence and finality.

## THE BEGINNING

Subsequent to the Reformation and for a good many years after it, the bulk of the population of the British Isles lived in small towns and villages — each centre being solely responsible for all the needs of its inhabitants. Contact with other towns and villages in the economic sense was not as necessary as it is to-day. What industry existed was carried out in the home or a workshop adjoining it. The trade of the town was looked after by the guild merchants who were, in turn, superseded by the craft guilds and the municipal authorities. The craft guilds set out the conditions of apprenticeship and in conjunction with the Corporation fixed a just price for all the goods produced. The guild system of the Middle Ages was in theory, based on the law of justice and charity, love of God and neighbour and the common good, but there was often a gap between theory and practice.

## EARLY CAPITALISM

The invention of the steam engine by Watt and the Spinning Jenny by Hargreave saw a vast change slowly take place. Family businesses disappeared as these contrivances were perfected and multiplied. Factories sprung up all over the land and the workers had to leave their cottage homes to work in them. Thus a wage earning class emerged who had no share in the capital and no say in their conditions of employment. The economic precept of 'Laizze Fair' was born. Justice and the theory of a fair price were swept aside and instead the whole concept and conduct of business affairs was based on the survival of the fittest. It is not hard to understand, therefore, why workers combined to resist exploitation and expose the evil motive of greed which was the prime incentive of eighteenth century liberalism.

## THE BIRTH OF TRADE UNIONISM

Trade unions first emerged as friendly societies set up to administer sick and funeral benefits but their business was invariably concerned with work and all its aspects. Gradually the workers began to see the tremendous potentialities of permanent association and what a force it could be in bettering their wages and conditions of employment. The employers were not slow to sense the danger to their authority and their uncontested right to determine wages and conditions. By exerting pressure on

the Government the employers were chiefly instrumental in having the Combination Laws of 1799 written into the statute book. These laws made all associations of workers illegal and the joining of such associations a criminal offence. They did not entirely suppress the unions but they were invoked from time to time against groups of workers and heavy penalties were inflicted. The Combination Laws were repealed in 1824 and as a result the trade unions burst into new life. Strikes and lockouts were the rule rather than the exception as the employers fought tooth and nail to outlaw the unions once again. They failed to do so but succeeded in having a law passed in 1825 banning all associations of persons for unlawful reasons but expressly permitting association for the purpose of regulating wages and hours of work. At last the existence of trade unions was recognised and the right to strike reluctantly conceded.

## THE GROWTH OF THE FACTORY SYSTEM

Gradually industry was perfecting its techniques and introducing new ones and these developments gave impetus to the growth of the factory system. However,

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there was no system of negotiation between workers and employers as we know it to-day. Conciliation councils were set up only as and when required. Gradually the one man concern gave way to the joint stock company and the cartel, since many factories throughout the land either had a common owner or were engaged in the manufacture of the same type of commodity. Consequently conciliation in industry became more difficult due to the wide range and complexity of problems and because the unions were ill-equipped to deal with them. This situation gave birth to the Whitely Council, later to become known as the Joint Industrial Council. These councils met at agreed intervals to fix wages and vary conditions on a national basis and to assist in the promotion of good relations in the particular industry. Progress in this field was much slower in this country and it was not until 1946 that the then Irish Government, perturbed by the high degree of industrial unrest after the second World War, passed the Industrial Relations Act, established the Labour Court and its subsidiary bodies. By its foundation, the Court eliminated the cost and delay in instituting proceedings in the civil courts. Since its inception the Labour Court has, from a Government viewpoint, proved an effective instrument in promoting industrial peace, though it has given some remarkable decisions against workers and done little to close the huge gap between higher and lower paid workers.

#### ARE STRIKES NECESSARY?

It is sometimes asked whether a strike is necessary at all when such machinery for settling claims and grievances exists. It can be answered that in certain circumstances a strike is not only just but is necessary in the interests of the workers themselves if they are to effectively defend their hard-won conditions. It must be emphasised that the whole concept of trade unionism is built around the strike weapon. It is the right to withdraw labour which may force an employer to concede a condition or a principle to which the workers may be justly entitled. On the other hand it is only fair to add that some workers and the trade unions can be unscrupulous and reckless by making indiscriminate use of the strike weapon and can cause unnecessary hardship for their fellow-workers, the community as a whole and the industry in which they work.

#### LIGHTNING STRIKES

Given the circumstances lightning strikes can be justified but they can sometimes be caused by irresponsible shop floor leadership which seeks to repudiate the democratic authority of the union. The effects and losses of such a strike may far outweigh the cause and selfish sectional gains achieved by it.

We need hardly dwell on the problems caused by the lightning strike and the hardship it inflicts on innocent workers and the community in general: the sudden stoppage of the production of flour or bread or the cessation of public heating, lighting and transport services can cause hardship and deprivation to the community.

Thus the right to strike is not an unqualified one and must be weighed against the rights of other workers and the community. But this does not mean that workers providing essential services cannot go on strike. Without the ultimate strike weapon these workers could be exploited because they provide essential services. In this context it should be noted that the majority of workers in dispute avail of the procedures, including the Labour Court, as a glance at the Court's annual reports will show. Moreover, no note is taken or any record kept of the countless claims and problems which are settled by direct negotiation between the workers and employers. This factor is never noticed by armchair industrial psychologists and correspondents who write off the top of their head in sensational terms.

After all, a strike is news but a peaceful settlement is seldom if ever mentioned. Nevertheless from time to time we hear cries of "Freeze wages", "Ban Strikes", or "Outlaw picketing". These invariably emanate from industrialists who have much to gain by pegging wages and executives in the £10,000 a year and upwards bracket who enjoy a progressive salary increase plus a sugaring of expenses and perks. Not for them the hard bargaining at the conference table. They "do their own deal" and then go forth to preach wage restraint to lower paid workers.

#### MAVERICK TRADE UNIONS

Without commenting further on the backwardness and ruthlessness of many employers or the limitations of the present conciliation machinery, there is still a great weakness in the Irish industrial system. This is the maverick or pirate union which does not recognise a central authority, repudiates national agreements and pays lip-service to conciliation procedures. These unions bargain from a sense of power rather than a sense of knowledge and responsibility. A desperate gambling attitude and an absence of a social conscience make it easy for them to create disruption and hardship amongst the community they claim to serve. So long as they exist so long will it take to remedy the ills of our economic society.

#### BRITISH-BASED UNIONS

Thousands of Irish are members of trade unions whose policies, procedures rules and regulations are largely formulated from Britain. To say this is not to attack the British trade unions who pioneered the struggle for the right to strike and gave dignity to workers by fighting industrial oppression. But it must also be said that the national executive council of a union based in London cannot always be expected to have the same degree of understanding of the problems of their Irish membership and of the industrial and economic conditions in the Republic. A number of examples could be given in support of this thesis. It is essential that there be greater trust and co-operation between Irish and British based unions if workers' solidarity, unity and progress is to be achieved.

#### IS LEGISLATION THE ANSWER?

Some people seem to believe that legislation is the only answer to curb lightning strikes. It is strongly hinted that the Minister or Labour intends to introduce new labour laws to solve this problem in the near future. The F.U.E. and other employer organisations are calling for the repeal of the Trade Disputes Act (1906). If this retrograde step is allowed it will weaken the whole trade union movement in this country. It must be remembered that this act was introduced because of the failure of the Trade Union Act (1871) and the Conspiracy and Protection Act (1875) to remove the disadvantages under which trade unions operated and to give them equality at the conference table. To turn the clock back would bring about a continual state of industrial warfare, provoking frequent and bitter confrontations throughout the land. This situation would wreck the unity and advancement of Irish workers.

### *Price increase*

We regret that from this month the price of the Limerick Socialist is being increased to 15p. The annual subscription is now £3, or £1.50 for 6 issues.

# Up and down the Irishtown

PART TEN

I went into St. John's Cathedral, the House of God. But I never felt the presence of God in it, only the presence of certain priests. I didn't like going to Confession. I never liked telling my sins to a priest. I wished I could confess like a Protestant—straight to God in my own room, even in bed.

Tomorrow was monthly Communion morning. My father would be looking around the Confraternity Section, careless like, pretending surprise when he saw me. If I wasn't there I'd sup sorrow.

I went on to the Confession box near the door and sat on the form against the wall. I put my hands back on the pipes but they were cold. I thought of my sins and made an Act of Contrition. The big man in front of me wanted to swap places. He said he was in no hurry either. He whispered: "I'm afraid; 'tis twenty years since I was at Confession."

I knelt in the dark box and thought of my sins. "I told lies. I gave back answers to my elders". And there was that other sin. I would keep that till last. A bad song. I sang a bad song in the street. Suppose the priest wanted to know the words. I'd have to tell him. What's that they were? Oh yes:

Hey lackity misereo foldelolodeloleh,  
Me wife she swallowed a pebble and laid a foundation stone,  
And the green grass grew all around the hole,  
And the green grass grew all around.

The slide snapped back. "Bless me, Father, for I have..." "Never mind that, boy, what did you do?" Rattled by the change of tactics and the curt command I forgot my resolve to keep the other sin till last. I blurted: "I sang bad songs in the street, Father." "You did what? Sang bad songs in the street! Get out of here and when you give over singing bad songs in the street come back to me!"

I was refused Absolution and put off my knees. Next to ex-communication this was the most terrible of edicts.

I rushed out of the box and almost collided with a woman. I felt everyone's eyes staring at my red face. I fled to another box.

Father Carroll bent his head and leaned nearer. "How long since your last Confession, my child?" I said: "About five minutes!" He gave a short laugh. "My goodness! You must be a dreadful sinner. What happened?" I told him everything. His hand covered mine as he squeezed it. Then he said something I would never forget. "Don't mind him. He gets liverish at times."

Tessie Brady was a very pious woman. You'd only to see her at Mass to know that or watch her doing the Stations of the Cross. Love and reverence glowed in her pale, flabby face. She was pale and flabby from what the world knows today as malnutrition. She lived in a stone built house, old beyond old, reeking with ground damp. Her kitchen and tiny bedroom had earthen floors.

The half-eight Mass was her greatest joy and consolation. Evening devotions, Novenas and Triduums saw her, shawl wrapped and head bent, shuffling up John Street to the cathedral. Just inside the church door to the left she'd kneel, and if you weren't looking for her — and who'd be looking for poor Tessie? — you'd never know she was there in the half dark corner, alone with God, the beauty of Heaven in her heart.

The last night of the Novena she knelt in the accustomed corner, praying long after the priest had left the altar. Few people remained in the church. Slowly and painfully she commenced the Stations. By the time she

*by John Bennis*

came to the Laying in the Sepulchre she was the only worshipper left. The sexton started to put out the lights. Muttering a final prayer, Tessie turned and shuffled across to the left aisle, standing a moment at the altar rail gate to thank and praise the hidden God for everything.

From the back of the church the sexton watched her make her slow way down the aisle and, to his annoyance, though not surprise, saw her stop and kneel before the statue of St. John. He watched, his patience under strain. He was a dour man, not given to unkindness, but fond of a drink. If I could get away now, he thought, I'd have time for a few pints; the pubs will be shut but Nancy Gorman's back door is handy.

But Tessie prayed on, her old work-worn knees on the cold chapel tiles, hands clasped across her broad, deep bosom, eyes fixed on the great high-flung statue of St. John. God love the woman, the sexton fumed, will she never stop, a half-hour at it now surely. God Almighty! He'd be lucky now if he got e'er a pint at all at this stage. He was tired and thirsty, with his patience dragged threadbare.

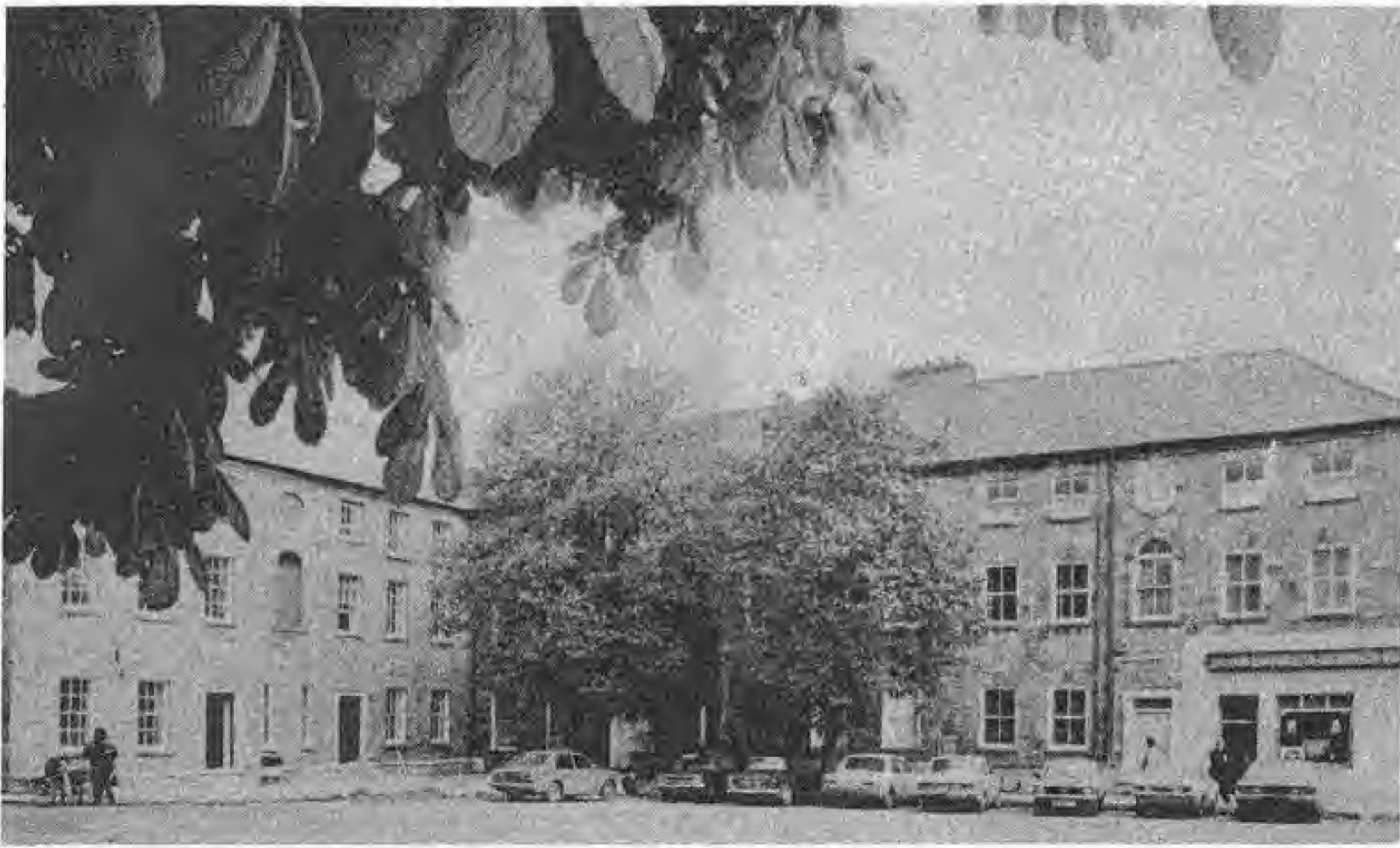
He coughed phlegm from his throat, rattled his iron-tipped heels but there was no sign from the kneeling woman that she heard anything. He rattled the church keys loudly. The echoes reverberated around the empty cathedral and came back to meet him. Go on woman, go on home! Look at the time it is! I want to lock up. But it was all to no avail. Tessie heard only the song of songs in her heart.

A reveller passed by the church on his way home from the pub singing a tipsy ditty. The sexton groned. Heavenly Father! He's happy; he has enough taken, and here I am in the House of God dying of thirst like the yella bittern. Panic thoughts ran riot. Time up, gentlemen, time up please. Come on now, all out together. The scene was a familiar one. Nancy standing at the door letting out the cagey ones; others playing with their drinks, twirling the dregs when she looked their way. Mick O'Brien in his usual spot, his back to the counter, giving "Happy Moments". What happened to Pat Quigley tonight? He must be sick or something. He was alright last night. He won't come now anyway, twouldn't do him much good. Mick O'Brien saying good night, and a couple of the cons hanging on.

The sexton wasn't angry nor did he love one whit less the woman who sought blessedness in God's House. Woman, he whispered, if you don't get out of the chapel this minute, I'll lock you in all night!

Tessie Brady was a poor, pious woman. Her husband Ned was likewise poor, owning nothing but the worn, faded blue suit of clothes on his back. But he was no way pious. Not that he was a bad man — far from it. He went to Mass on Sunday and all Holy days and did his Easter duty. It was even said he'd kneel down now and again and join in the Rosary. A fisherman by trade, he scraped an existence from fluke fishing in season; out of season he joined his mates at the river wall, smoked his pipe, yarned and spat.

The river wall had advantages. First of all it held the nets on a simple wooden frame to dry and be mended. From there the men could keep an eye on the boat



ST. JOHN'S SQUARE

anchored out in the Abbey river or tied up at the slip. But principally the wall was the ideal vantage point from which to watch three public houses and to see who went in and who came out.

The fishing season was now over and the long ganlow was lying bottom up on makeshift trestles in Curry Lane. The nets had their last mending and were taken from the river wall and stored away in old canvas sacks, a few pieces of tarry rope being shoved in to discourage moths and inquisitive women folk.

The watching of the three public houses was a serious business. The times were worse than bad but Saturday held the hope of a drink or the price of a drink. Ned Barry, having the better eyes, kept vigil on Clohessy's, the pub farthest away. Takey Elligot looked hard at Quilligan's, and his brother Plunkett's gaze seldom strayed from McInerney's.

The day was as cold as an Eskimo's snot. A spiteful wind coming over the slip wall cut and bit back and buttock. Every now and then a hand would reluctantly leave a warm pocket to put a rag to a nose or eye. The tide was in, aiding and abetting the wall-jumping wind as Ned cut and crammed the last jot of tobacco into his clay pipe, then struck and put a "Take me" match to the overworked bowl, pulling and puffing till the smoke came steady and strong. He took the short stem from his mouth and spat, eyes going back to Clohessy's, only half aware of the passing traffic.

Guinness's long cars, chock-full with empties were returning to their store beside the canal. Barrels, half-barrels and firkins were piled high behind the driver sitting reins in one hand, whip in the other, without eye or salute for the mean mortals scratching their cold bottoms on the river wall. Like God the driver looked in his bleached corduroy jacket and trousers. The big, fat smug Clydesdale horses were taking the ir goddamn time. They were big enough to pull Noah's Ark up Doonass Falls and treated the whipcrack with the contempt and self-assured distain it deserved, in the full and true knowledge that God made man but Guinness owned him, and that whipping a horse was first cousin to the sack. Parkmen, prodding their asses with nailshod sticks, went homeward bound with empty carts after a long day in the Irishtown haggling over cabbage. Now and again a motor car or lorry added a foreign noise and smell, drawing

suspicious, resentful retorts from the slip.

Ned puffed, not altogether contentedly. The last jot of baccy was in his pipe and he hadn't the ghost of a notion where the next bit would come from unless it fell from the sky. His two mates were likewise stony broke, not even a penny jot between them. He knew, too, they had one eye on the pipe and had its smoking time figured to the last pull. He pulled and puffed. Dreams came with the heady smoke. The long pull to the fishing grounds below Coonagh, the strong, fast tide friendly at the stern, taking the backache from the heavy oars, drag after drag of net, tub after tub of fluke, till the boat, big and all as it was, hung so low in the water that even greedy Takey cried crack. Home then to lashings of drink and cut plug enough to disinfect Watergate slaughterhouse.

A bony elbow in the ribs sent a stab of pain through his dreams. He took the pipe from his mouth and without a word handed it to Takey.

Ned was trying hard to discern the faces of men entering Clohessy's when Takey cried, "Is that who-you-know after going into Quilligan's?" "Begor, it could be, tis his pub anyway. Why?" "Ah, no why, only he owes me a few bob. D'you think he saw me?" "He made sure he saw you when he wanted to borry the few bob." "The devil the lie, that. I've a good mind to g'over and ask him it back". "A dumb priest loses his dues, but before you go give me back the pipe; you're making a baste of yourself with it and, besides, Plunkett wants a pull or two." "Here you are then. I'll g'over and try me luck with who-you-know."

Takey left the river wall. "May Jaysus soften his conscience," Ned called after him. "And if ye get it don't forget there's two more here with mouths on 'em."

They were still staring at the door closing on Takey's back when a country-man strolled up. "God save you kindly, honest man. A hard day for the road," muttered Takey. "Tis that surely," said the countryman, eyeing the pipe. "Would ye every give me a drag or two, I'm hungry for a smoke". "The curse o'God on the pull," growled Ned, "How the hell do I know who you are?" "You don't know me", gasped the aggrieved countryman. "You don't know me? Sure everyone knows me, I'm Mike Shine from Newport." "I don't care a fiddler's if you were Toole from Oola. Go away and shove your head in a bag!"

# Haughey in the saddle

BY JOHN CASEY

Charlie Haughey is the most controversial Taoiseach ever to have held that office. He is a millionaire with a net worth of at least £3 million. He lives in a Georgian mansion designed by James Gandon at Kinsealy Co. Dublin. It stands on a 280 acre farm on which a large herd of dry cattle and about 30 racing horses. The rooms are furnished with antique furniture and the walls adorned with original paintings.

The source of Mr. Haughey's wealth has always been a subject for speculation. The public do not know for certain how he made his money. Whether they should or should not know is an open question. The general feeling one gets is that the majority couldn't care less, which gives some insight into the level of morality demanded from public figures. The files at 60/61 Amiens Street, the offices of Haughey Boland and company, could tell us a lot about the financial dealings of the new Prime Minister.

In 1950 Haughey set up this accountancy firm with Harry Boland, a brother of Kevin's and onetime secretary of Taca. The business prospered. Haughey married Maureen Lemass in 1951. In 1957 he was elected to the Dail and in 1960 he became a parliamentary secretary. A number of business people saw the advantages of dealing with Haughey and Boland. Haughey went on to become Minister for Justice, Minister for agriculture and Minister for Finance.

He claimed that he severed all connections with the firm in 1966 when he became finance minister. Next to nobody believes that. In 1969, for instance, when he brought the Kinsealy estate he used a cover company Abbeyville Ltd. to negotiate and conclude the deal. The registered office was given as 60 Amiens Street. Then there was the highly secretive purchase of the Baldoyle racecourse. The purchase company changed names and addresses as often as Ulrike Meinhof. One of these companies was registered at 60/61 Amiens Street. The front man is John Byrne a millionaire property developer and speculator.

Byrne, a Kerryman, is one of those phenomena of nature favoured by Haughey, a self made man. He made his money as a sub-contractor and ballroom owner in England. In this country he has built and developed office blocks in central Dublin, a dance hall and luxury hotel in Kerry and low quality estates for Dublin's working class. In the coalition period he applied for planning permission for a development the size of Athlone town in the green belt between Baldoyle and Portmarnock. When the then Minister for Local Government James Tully refused building permission, Byrne's representatives complained of political victimization.

Byrne and Haughey are close friends and the latter's name has always been silently linked to that the North County Dublin project. It was just down the road that he made one of his biggest recorded killings, the sale of his house and 45 acres of land at Raheny for £204,000 to the Gallagher Group in 1969. Gerard Sweetman the Fine Gael politician accused him at the time of using his position as finance minister to avoid payment of income tax and surtax. Haughey issued the standard "categorical denial". In the intervening years he has bought and sold horses, purchased a standard millionaire island, Inishvickillaune, the second largest of the Blasket Islands, and a fifty year old trawler which he renovated for travel down the Irish coast to Kerry. Informed sources say that he has just about broken even on the horses. He has never had anything resembling a great horse; some of the better ones have been placed in minor stakes; others have lost him money.

Horses are a passion rather than a business with him. So the source of his money remains something of a mystery. The popular belief is that it was made as a sleeping partner in different companies involved in land and property speculation.

Of two things there is no doubt: he is a millionaire and the recognised political spokesman for the so-called 'whizz kids of the 'sixties', a group of middle-aged rich entrepreneurs who identify with him and share his philosophy of life.

This is the key to the selection and ratification of Haughey as Taoiseach. A small but powerful group of Fianna Fail millionaires, prominent financial backers, felt that he alone was of them, that he alone understood and sympathised, and that he alone was capable 'of moulding' and developing the state along the capitalist lines they desired. A simple way of putting this is that he would help them to make more money. To them he is a visible symbol of the derring do moneymaker of the Lemass years.

There is a direct link and continuity between the two men. It is to this small but powerful group and their large number of admirers and supporters that Haughey owes his office. This is the old Taca element the real backbone, head, and golden belly of the party. They felt it was time one of their own was elected leader and they were right. They had what they considered a milk and watery Jack Lynch for what must have seemed an eternity, trying to keep two feet in twenty-two camps. With Colley they were being offered a newer model of the same and they quite simply said "No". They wanted the naked face of Fianna Fail capitalism. That is C. J. Haughey.

The move could be a good thing. He personifies what the party is all about. A party of republicanism, big business and industry. They are the republican party. Labour they see as of the left, Fine Gael of the right, they themselves of the republican centre. Their past success owes much to the centrist position. Their republicanism is like the election perfume Charlie gave to the Raheny housewives; its aroma is hard to define. They are verbal republicans, prisoners of de Valera's vision, the unification of Ireland.

For the past ten years the party has been schizoid. A large number of supporters and some of the T.D's have been crypto-Provos. They had to listen to their leaders condemning and denounce Provisionalism. Their hearts were with the Provos, their heads with the party. They saw the champions of traditional green nationalism, Boland and Blaney, cast unceremoniously from the fold. The republicans, like the money men, felt unrepresented. The true heirs to the bloodline were out of the mainstream, living on the fringe. Haughey was a founder of the Provisional, tried for illegal importation of arms. He was true republican and nationalist by their terms. Under Lynch the party leadership had drifted perceptibly towards a two-nations position. The ship was off course. Only Haughey at the helm could right its course. So ran their scenario.

The Northern question is like the march on Moscow, a political graveyard. It could prove to be Haughey's undoing. As Taoiseach he had to denounce the use of violence, yet he believes passionately in unification. He has a heroic self image. There is only one great achievement left to him: to unite Ireland. Haughey the unifier of the country would live forever. It would rank him with de Valera as the greatest Irish nationalist politician of our times. But this historic objective is impossible to bring about without a civil war. The unionists are determined to

resist to the death.

Haughey will try to raise the level of Southern involvement, he may try to persuade Britain to scale down its commitment. But even if he were successful in this he still has to deal with the intractable unionists. The Provos can expect nothing from him. All they can do is detract from his glory. He doesn't need them now. Even Haughey will not attempt to use force by calling on the National Army. Unfortunately there are many who wax Provisional in their cups but few of these would support a civil war for the nebulous glory of flying the tricolour over Belfast Town Hall.

So Haughey is on a cleft-stick and will find it decidedly difficult to satisfy his hawkish supporters, on the one hand, and also lead a somewhat suspicious population. The electorate have demonstrated with regularity that their primary concerns are the basic ones—employment, wages, housing, taxation, living standards. It is possible to whip up a Papal hysteria but it is more difficult with war. There's a difference between a carnival and a battle field and Haughey's no fool. He's one of the shrewdest and most Machiavellian politician the state has known. So, for the next two years, he will shelve his visions of greatness and set about satisfying the punters' basic needs. First of all he's got to lift the country out of the slough into which it has fallen. Then, if the people return him as Taoiseach, he will bend his considerable energies to 'solving' the Northern problem and to carving a monument to himself in history.

Finally, we come to the attacks on him. Cruise O'Brien

referred to his "sulphurous charms" and to a "faint whiff of brimstone". One detects on O'Brien's side a faint whiff of jealousy and a lack of charm, sulphurous or otherwise. O'Brien is a failed politician, Haughey a successful one. He has a common touch and superficial charm that the intellectual editor-in-chief never possessed. Then there was Fitzgerald with his talk of a flawed pedigree, bad example to the youth and hints of a murky past.

Fitzgerald would prefer to mark Colley for the next two years and slip with ease into the Taoiseach's chair than to take on the ruthless, formidable character now occupying it.

Cluskey, speaking for the Labour Party, took a predictable line: he was identified with a group of ruthless capitalists ripping off everything and everybody in the state. So it is. That is free enterprise. The Labour Party have no intention of changing the system, so why all the righteous indignation? The best thing that could happen to the party is that it would be subsumed into Fine Gael to make a good liberal, social democratic party.

Haughey's ascendancy is important for the left. It draws the lines more firmly, clear the images. Anyone who now believes that Fianna Fail is the party of the labourer and small farmer is an innocent. We have two conservative parties and a would-be one. It is a time when people can observe and analyse the parties and what they stand for. There is also the hope they will act on this analysis.

Notes On

# THE DR. LONG STORY

## PART SIX

### Alleged Proselytising In The City

Considerable comment has been occasioned in the city by the alleged attempt by rather a novel means, of carrying out the system of proselytising in the city. Some months ago a Doctor Long opened a dispensary at Thomas Street, whereby free treatment was to be afforded to certain sections of the community. The treatment was given and the treatment pretty largely availed of, but later on it was stated that the medical assistance so gratuitously offered was made the means of proselytising propaganda.

The Rev. James Cregan, C.C., one of the most indefatigable of the city clergy, was the first to take public notice of the new dispensary and spoke in strong terms of its object at the weekly meeting of the Women's Sodality attached to St. Michael's Parochial Church. In a letter to a contemporary published on Saturday evening last, the Rev. gentleman appended an extract from a report of the Dublin Medical Mission, 6, Chancery Place, which seems to place the character of the dispensary beyond doubt.

The extract states that some months ago Dr. Long left Dublin "in answer to a very definite and unexpected call to open a medical mission in Limerick under the Irish Church Missions." The reports speaks of Dr. Long's loss to the Dublin poor and adds:-

Thus we believe the Lord has honoured us in choosing one of our very best workers for a more difficult field of labour. We follow him with earnest prayer that he may prosper and be abundantly blessed in this undertaking."

Fr. Cregan states:-

As the priest in charge of the district in which he established himself, I feel it my duty to state publicly that he (Dr. Long) is here for proselytising purposes and that

in giving free medical advice and free medicine his object is to secure opportunities of speaking on religious subjects with the sick poor and thus carry out the end of the proselytising society who sent him here.

It is alleged that hymn singing and harmonium playing takes place during the visits of patients, and that religious matters antagonistic to the faith of the Catholics were introduced. The Very Rev. Fr. Tierney, Spiritual Director of the Men's Confraternity at the Redemptorist Church, happened to be passing through Catherine Street on Saturday. He saw a woman leave the dispensary and, having spoken to her, entered the place and ordered all Catholics to leave.

There were about 11 or 12 women and three or four men in the place at the time. Fr. Tierney states that the doctor came out of an office and said: "How dare you, sir, come into my house." In reply the clergyman said the door was open to everybody—that he understood some of the people were Catholics and they would have to leave the place—that it was a "souperous" practice set up by "souters". The doctor then ordered him to get out at once. He replied: "Just try to put me out."

Fr. Tierney then walked to the steps and as he got there the door was closed. There were some Catholics inside, Fr. Tierney states, and he continued knocking until a crowd collected. Dr. Long then appeared and said he never interfered with anyone's religion, and a man in the crowd shouted: "That is not true." As the crowd was gathering, Fr. Tierney went away.

The Catholic clergy have warned their flock against going to the dispensary.

("Limerick Weekly Echo", Saturday, 1/10/1898)

When Limerick thought of the formation  
 Of that blest tribe, the Corporation,  
 The Devil's anglers went about  
 To fish the gipsy trucklers out.  
 From the back lanes, nooks, alleys, holes,  
 Human gorillas came in shoals,  
 To form this heterogeneous school,  
 And play the scoundrel or the fool.  
 Of course — like every other sham,  
 That every day starts up to damn  
 The hoodwinked people of this realm —  
 The greatest rascals took the helm.  
 Hard rates were levied every place,  
 The burghers all were plucked like geese;  
 Motions were carried — schemes were spun,  
 To make a poor-house of the town.  
 Places and pensions were in rogue  
 For every hypocrite and rogue  
 Who was by interest, tie or blood,  
 Connected with the juggling brood.  
 Every knave who had a vote,  
 Equal to a five pound note,  
 By some reverse of human nature  
 Became a parish legislator.  
 Every trafficker and thief  
 Who loved cash, cauliflowers and beef,  
 Arose, like balloons charged with gas,  
 To show the charity of their class.  
 Blest was the man whose safe election  
 Hung on the hinge of Church connection;  
 His promotion was quite sure,  
 Though the devil stood at the door.  
 Never, since Nero burned Rome,  
 And fiddled o'er the city's doom,  
 Did such a low-sprung base banditti  
 Humbug, cheat, and curse a city.

"Who shall be Mayor?" a guttural cry  
 Rang from all sides — "Tis I", "tis I!"  
 Up started every Corporate bear  
 Howling aloud — "I must be Mayor!"  
 Then such a riot, rout and rabble,  
 Since God confused the men of Babel,  
 Was never seen or heard to roar  
 On earth's polluted lap before.  
 Abuse was active — slander plied  
 Her poison-lance on every side.  
 With grin and growl, bear leapt on bear,  
 And buffed, like devils, here and there.  
 Every grade of huxtering sinners —  
 Dhudeen-makers, tobacco-spinners;  
 Boolthane retailers, dud-shop screws  
 Steeled as the God-abandoned Jews.  
 Venders of kelp and soap and salt,  
 Adulterers of meat and malt;

# THE CORPORATION

PART ONE

FROM SHAWN-A-SCOOB

BY MICHAEL HOGAN

Wholesale corn-mongers great,  
 As if the world was their estate —  
 Battled for the Civic Chair,  
 Each aspiring to be Mayor.  
 Ne'er in town or country met  
 A more rotten, upstart set;  
 Had Sodom and Gomorrow known them,  
 Even those curst cities would disown them.  
 What a pity that a few  
 Of the honest, good and true,  
 Should mix with this infernal clan  
 Of the dregs of fallen man.  
 Bad company destroys good morals,  
 Like ale poured into dirty barrels.  
 Thus honest hearts that mix among  
 This unwashed pettifogging gang,  
 In twenty months become, at least  
 As ripe for villany as the rest.  
 Reader, let us take a peep  
 At this herd of mangy sheep;  
 Thro' the hall we'll stroll about —  
 Mark them as I point them out.  
 See that fellow<sup>2</sup> with a face  
 Like one of Cromwell's babes of grace;  
 In that rich beggar's carcass runs  
 The blackest blood of Mammon's sons;  
 Smooth hypocrite, exact and cold,  
 Wooed and respected for his gold,  
 Tho' for his fellow-men he feels  
 Much as a hungry crane for eels.  
 Heaven! what a burlesque on humanity,  
 To see the lovers of urbanity  
 Throng round this modern Robin Hood,  
 And shake his hand and call him good.  
 At early morn he goes to pray —  
 Then on his neighbours preys all day,  
 With many a stricken creature's curse  
 Raining upon his soul and purse.  
 Of all the scourging ills that chase  
 The persecuted toiling race,  
 Lord save them from the iron clutches  
 Of religious rogues and usuring wretches.  
 The radical who drinks and swears,  
 And once in nine months says his prayers.  
 Would aid distress with hand more free  
 Than the cold, canting devotee.